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THE IRON SOLDIER

OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

Official Newsletter of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team

Al-Anbar Province, Iraq

THOUSANDS OF IRAQI POLICE RECRUITS DEFY THE INSURGENCY IN RAMADI

By Cpl. Shane Suzuki

AR RAMADI, IRAQ – With the Iraqi Army taking giant steps toward becoming a more powerful security force for Iraq, efforts are now being concentrated on building and training a new local Iraqi Police (IP) force and creating a long lasting solution for security here in the Provincial Capital City of Ramadi; a former insurgent stronghold.

The dedicated efforts made by local Ramadi community leaders, government officials, Iraqi Security Forces, and Coalition Forces, have resulted in successfully obtaining the large number of Iraqi Police recruits needed to secure the streets of Ramadi.

"These recruiting drives have been an ongoing effort," said Marine Maj. Robert Rice, the Officer in Charge of the local Police Partnership Program (P3); teams assigned to oversee the formation and development of IP's in Iraq. "This is the first time we've seen a significant opportunity for sustained success. We now have the support of the tribal sheiks, governor, and



A large group of former Iraqi Police Officers walk towards the registration area in order to secure a seat in a future training class. The Iraqi Police registration drive held on February 7-8-9, 2006 at the Ramadi Glass Factory was extremely successful ; Over 1,800 Sons of Al Anbar defied the insurgency and registered for the opportunity to become Iraqi Policemen.

Photo by Capt. Alfred A. Smith

the local citizens. For the first time, it looks like a large number of people want to participate and become police officers in their neighborhoods."

Getting the support of the local leadership was key to the success of the elections and the overall security of the city, said Rice. Without their help, the past elections and current police recruiting drives would not have been as successful as they have been, he added.

"A lot of this success goes back to November when we began engaging the local leadership and working through them to increase participation," he said. "That engagement led to the people wanting to participate, which, in turn, led to the great turnout at the elections. It's that enthusiasm that has led to this opportunity."

This success comes as somewhat of a surprise to the Marines, Soldiers and civilians running the recruiting process. Previ-

ous attempts resulted in poor turnouts and results, explained John Weiss, an International Police Liaison Officer from Palm Beach Gardens, FL.

"The last time we had a recruiting drive, we prepared more than 400 packages, and in four days, we had 14 people show up," he said. "This time we had more than 1,000 [Sons of Al Anbar] show up ready to ship to training despite the suicide

bomber. It shows the progress we are making. Three months ago, people were too afraid to be seen around Coalition Forces. Now, they won't be denied the chance to participate."

During the January recruiting drive, an estimated 1,000 new applicants were approved and became, in effect, the first citizens of Ar Ramadi to take responsibility

"The suicide bombing was something that backfired for the insurgency here."

for the safety of their fellow citizens. However, approximately midway through the registration process a terrorist suicide

(Continued on page 13)



Iraqi Police recruits prepare to leave for the academy.

Photo by Cpl. Shane Suzuki

SEE AND READ THE IRON SOLDIER IN VIVID COLOR AT <http://ironsoldiers.army.mil>

PRESIDENT VISITS 876th EN SOLDIERS

by 1st Lt. Russell DeGraw

Specialist Chad Danusis and Spc. Dave Dyer from the 861st Engineer Company, 876th Engineer Battalion are currently at Fort Sam Houston, Texas Treatment Center due to an IED attack. Both Soldiers were burned on their hands, face, and legs on December 9, 2005.

The road to recovery recently got a little less miserable, due to an unexpected visitor. President George W. Bush recently visited the treatment center and awarded Purple Heart Medals and Presidential Coins to selected Soldiers during their rehabilitation.

Danusis and Dyer were two of the selected nine Soldiers to receive these awards directly from the Commander In Chief.

After the presentation, the Soldiers had an opportunity to have their pictures taken with the president and spent some time talking privately with President Bush.

Danusis and Dyer are recovering well, and will be returning to Rhode Island soon to progress with their physical



(L - R) Lt. Col. Suzanne Avery (SPC Chad Danusis' Aunt), Renee Danusis (Spc. Danusis' Mom), Spc. Chad Danusis and President George W. Bush

therapy.

Coincidentally, Danusis' aunt, had donated a horse to Arlington, named "W".

EXTRA PROTECTION

By Spc. Roger Beauregard

If you look at the attached photo, you will notice that the gunner's turret was modified to ensure additional protection.

The design came from Spc. Scott Betit, Hoosic Falls, NY (Top) and Spc. Roger Beauregard, St. Albans, VT (bottom right). They are both Soldiers from HHC 1/172 Armor Battalion, Support Platoon. The vehicle commander is Sgt. 1st Class Karl Labor (bottom left) of Fairfax, VT.

Their Humvee is better known as the "Snoopy Mobile". This Humvee was the first to be modified to help provide the gunner additional protection.



Since its modification, other Humvees within the Battalion have been equipped with this added protection.

Since the modification of the Humvee, this design has helped prevent injuries to gunners on two or more occasions from IED detonations.

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MAILING ADDRESSES FOR :

Ar-Ramadi
Soldiers Name
Soldiers Unit
Camp Ar-Ramadi
APO, AE 09362-9997

Habbaniyah / Taqaddum
Soldiers Name
Soldiers Unit
Camp Taqaddum
APO, AE 09381

Al Asad
Soldiers Name
Soldiers Unit
Camp Al Asad
APO, AE 09333

Please take into consideration, when mailing perishables: mail could take up to two weeks to reach Soldiers.

SMART THINKING LEADS TO CACHE

By 1st Lt. Justin Wolfe

Ar Ramadi, Iraq – At 5:00 a.m., on Jan. 20th, 2006, Soldiers from Charlie Company, 876th Engineer Battalion, 2/28 Brigade Combat Team with support from Headquarters Company, 876th Engineers, USMC Anglico, and the 1st Battalion, 7th Division Iraqi Army Platoon set out on another mission to strengthen the infrastructure of Al Anbar Province Iraqi Army and Coalition Forces bases.

The mission started off like many of the others we have done over the past seven months, with changes to the plan from the beginning. We arrived on Objective Juice Box with just about zero lunar illumination.

When we reached the first canal crossing, we found that an excavator had dug the crossing up and it was not passable with vehicles. We adjusted our plan from that point and began the cache sweep on the north side of the canal rather than the south. We swept the north side using visual and mechanical sweeps with our mine detectors. Nothing was found on the north side of the canal so we crossed the canal at a foot crossing about a kilometer west from our original crossing point.

We then began to sweep back to the east on the south side of the canal. At this time, the only American Soldiers on the south side of the canal were two trainers for the Iraqi Soldiers, Staff Sgt. Dominick Mazza from Washington, PA, and myself [1st Lt. Justin Wolfe, a resident of Jeannette, PA]. Normally, the Iraqi soldiers get very excited and tend to walk or run very fast when the mission



Soldiers from Charlie Company, 876th Engineer Battalion, 2/28 Brigade Combat Team get down and dirty as they retrieve munitions from a mud pit in the Al Anbar Province, on January 20, 2006.
Photo submitted by 1st Lt. Justin Wolfe

is near completion. Mazza and I were approximately 200 meters behind them when one of their trainers called on the radio stating that an Iraqi Army Soldier spotted a possible Improvised Explosive Device (IED) on our original planned crossing. Staff Sgt. Mazza and I moved to their location to help confirm the discovery while the Iraqi forces set up a cordon of the area to search for a possible triggerman.

Once on site, we were able to identify that it was not an IED, but rather two exposed rounds from the cache that were disturbed when the excavator dug up our original crossing point.

As combat engineers we are trained that when dealing with caches or items of this nature there is the chance of these items having anti-handling devices or booby traps attached. We took our

time clearing away the dirt from the rounds keeping a careful eye for such threats. On the southern side of the embankment, we uncovered an additional three rounds.

We continued to sweep the south side of the canal with

the mine detectors, Mazza, having worked construction with heavy equipment in the civilian sector, had a theory that the rounds we found on the south embankment were probably from the north side. He believed that the rounds had been displaced by the excavator which disturbed the cache and ended up dumping dirt and the rounds on the south side. We put this theory to the test. Once we were on the north side of the canal, we were barely out of the water when his mine detector starting getting strong hits for metal from the radar.

During the next four hours we were waist deep in mud and water pulling round after round out of the ground. We needed additional support, so two Soldiers from Headquarters Company, 876th Engineers assisted in the search; Spc. David Powell from Enon Valley, PA, and Spc. Wesley Green, from Bedford, PA. In addition, Spc. Jesse Dorchak, a member of C Co. 876 Engineers and a resident of Johnstown, PA also provided a hand.

At the end of it all we unearthed 76 - 100mm Yugoslavian High Explosive Anti-Tank (HEAT) rounds, and 165 propellant sticks.

Everyone was very pleased with the cache find and the work that day. Although we will be cleaning our gear for the next few days, perhaps even weeks, everyone can rest assured that the enemy lost a lot of their means of attack that day, and the Iraqi Army and Coalition Forces can continue their mission knowing they will not be attacked by these rounds.



876 EN Soldiers stand proudly next to some of the HEAT Rounds they retrieved from the mud pit on Jan 20th. (left to right) 1st Lt. Justin Wolfe, Spc Wesley Green, Staff Sgt. Dominick Mazza, Spc. David Powell & Spc Jesse Dorchak.

LAWRENCEVILLE ENGINEERS UNCOVER CACHES

By 1st Lt. Antonia Greene

HABBANIYAH, IRAQ –Soldiers from Alpha 135th Engineer Company, attached to Task Force 1-110th Infantry, and Iraqi Army Soldiers from the 2nd Battalion 3rd Brigade 1st Division discovered two significant weapon caches in the northwest area of Khalidiyah on January 29, 2006.

As part of continuous counter insurgency operations, the Lawrenceville, Ill., Soldiers and the 2-3-1 IA discovered the caches based on intelligence information that had been passed on to Iraqi Army & Coalition Forces by the local Iraqi citizens.

Over the course of several hours, both the Lawrenceville Engineers and the IA Soldiers discovered an abundance of Improvised Explosive Device (IED) making materials, weapons, and other insurgent contraband. The mission spanned over five kilometers, encompassing both sides of the Euphrates River banks. The 135th Engineers operated mostly in Western Jazeera and worked alongside 2nd Bn, 3rd Brigade IA Soldiers.

The 135th uncovered most of the buried munitions in the reeds along the river.

“This was a significant find and was beneficial to both US and Iraqi forces operating in the area.”

“These spots are conducive to quick retrieval and transport by enemy forces,” said Bridgeport, IL, resident, 1st Sgt. Jerry Harper.

Among the cache finds were three insurgent suicide vests, which were designed to be easily concealed under loose fitting clothing. Additionally the cache consisted of a large quantity of mortar rounds ranging in size from 122-160 mm, rocket launchers, high explosive rocket warheads, grenades, a 23 mm anti-aircraft gun, numerous small arms ammunitions, and various IED making equipment.

“This was a significant find and was



135 Engineers / Sgt. 1st Class David Vair (back center) and Sgt. 1st Class Michael Jackson (right) try to keep up inventory on a rapidly expanding cache site.
Photo submitted by 1st Lt. Antonia Greene

beneficial to both US and Iraqi forces operating in the area. I am proud of my Soldiers and our Iraqi counterparts and we will continue to aggressively search potential cache sites and decrease insurgent stockpiles,” said Capt. Doug Masters, Commander of the 135th Engineer Company and a resident of Minooka, Ill.

Terrorists operating in the Khalidiyah area continue to endanger the local Iraqi citizens through murder and intimidation tactics. Insurgents linked to Al Qaida in Iraq (AQIZ) cell which is a part of the Abu Musab Al Zarqawi network in Ramadi, have vowed to disrupt the newly elected democratic process by intimidating citizens of Al Anbar.

The 135th Engineer Company is attached to the 876th Engineer Battalion from Johnstown Pa. The 876th is comprised of Soldiers from across the United States to include: Johnstown, P.A., Sellersville, PA., Lawrenceville, Ill., and East Greenwich, R.I.

“I can’t tell you how proud I am of the Soldiers of the 135th Engineer Company,” said

Capt. Masters. “I believe that today we dealt a major blow to the insurgents’ ability to operate in our area. Hopefully this will severely degrade their ability to attack Coalition Forces and we’ll have a safer neighborhood for everyone here in the Al Anbar province.”

Ongoing counterinsurgency operations conducted by Soldiers of the 2/28 BCT Iron Brigade in the Ramadi area, are establishing a more secure environment for the local citizens.

The Explosive Ordnance Disposal unit was called to dispose of the dangerous munitions and IED making equipment. There were no casualties or equipment damages during the discovery of the caches.



135th Engineers / Sgt. Ricky Ard (left) and Sgt. 1st Class David Vair (right) inventory a cache, while other 135 EN Soldiers continue to search for more munitions.
Photo submitted by 1st Lt. Antonia Greene.

THE MEASURE OF SUCCESS

by Capt. Herbert Nash

The chill of the 20-minute ride in the back of an open-topped truck still throbs under our body armor and gloves as we unload and start to assemble for the move onto our first objective. It is now just before 6 a.m., with dawn wedged as a red streak along the eastern horizon of desert and scattered trees. Our mission this morning is simple: to walk among the people of this small community of farmers, talk about happenings in the area, find what we can about insurgents, and leave behind a positive impression.

Nothing in our lives is taken for granted, though, as simple a mission as it might seem, especially in a scenario like this. This is not really our mission. We are responsible for the area, but the big players this time are the 30 or so Iraqi Soldiers who are being trained by Americans near our base. They outnumber us four to one on this patrol, and are most of the security we're going to get today. One day soon, they will have responsibility for the whole mission, but for now they will be our perimeter while we talk to the people inside our circle of Iraqi firepower.

We move out over farm fields, thick and soft with turned earth, uneven, full of irrigation trenches and unexpected holes. The Iraqi squads move quickly – it is the first thing you notice about them – they run into position, enthusiastic to use their new training. An hour earlier, as the trucks prepared to move out of our staging area, they chanted the Shahada, the universal prayer and first Pillar of Islam: "There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is his Prophet." In spite of the early



The Iraqi Army is quickly becoming a strong, proud and independent force within Ramadi

morning, all of them were wide awake and bubbling with energy and eagerness.

The Iraqis move in to the compound first, knock on the doors, and go in to make sure that no threat exists from inside the houses. After they move out to join their comrades on the perimeter, we approach the homeowners and discuss our mutual concerns. "Sabah al kher," – good morning; "sabah an nur" – and good morning to you. "How is your family's health... What have you heard of the elections that are coming up soon... Please understand that we need your help to secure this area from the insurgents who threaten us all...What can you tell us about..."

The conversation swirls around the odd reality of local farmers and their families surrounded by Soldiers from two nations. The interpreter smiles and chats a little beyond the formal interview; we give the children candy and stuffed animals; the Marine sniper team scans the neighborhood for danger; one farmer's wife forces a bag of dates and several flatbreads, still warm from the oven, into our hands. "Shukran, shukran" – thank you. "Will you vote... Who destroyed the abandoned building down the road... Would your children attend a school if one was built nearby?" "An sh'Allah" – God willing.

After a time we are all ready to part ways. It has been long enough to be polite, quick enough to be safe. "Shukran," "ma'a salama." – goodbye. We withdraw first, watched over by the Iraqi cordon, which peels off behind us and moves back to where the trucks are staged.

Sitting in the back of the truck for the trip back to our base, I think about how these visits run together in my memory, and I know that these details will be folded into those that already crowd my thoughts. A visit at a time – relationships grow, faces become familiar. This is how a war like this is won. In a land where a morning visit from the army used to mean that family members would disappear forever, I take a few dates, and pass the bag to the Iraqi Soldier next to me. "Shukran," he grins. "Shukran."



An Iraqi Soldier greets a local man in a town near Ramadi. The Iraqi Army is becoming more involved in the communities the operate in. The result is more information about insurgent activity from people within the community.

OPERATION SNAPSHOT by Sgt. Charity Lewis

OPERATION SNAPSHOT-Ramadi.
Article by Sgt Charity Lewis

On a rare occasion the story teller gets to become part of the story. This was the day I got to do just that. I am a Food Service Specialist.

So, when I volunteered to do my part for The War on Terrorism, I thought I'd just be stuck in a hot, noisy, not quite so modern kitchen.

Fortunately for me, that's not the case.

I was attached to the 2/28 BCT, to be more specific, the S5 section-Civil Affairs. Now I realize that doesn't sound very interesting, and at first I thought so as well, but then I started to figure out the purpose of Civil Affairs. I actually get to be a part of helping the people in Iraq.

Whether it is to figure out how to build it, rebuild it, tear it down, clean it up, organize it, move it, remove it, improve it, create it, teach it, or advertise it, in other words, just get it done.

Since my arrival in Ramadi, I instantly

The children began to quickly gather around us with their usual smiles and enthusiasm.

began to develop a long distance working relationship with a company appropriately called Spirit of America, a non-profit organization that is dedicated to helping military personnel get donated supplies to aid the citizens of Iraq and Afghanistan.

Since I was introduced via email to SoA I have had the privilege of helping them with such projects as; delivery of over 1400 backpacks STUFFED with school supplies, hundreds and hundreds of stuffed animals, and over \$1 million in medical supplies.

As I was surfing their internet site one day I came across a project they called Operation Snapshot. They actually had an agreement with the Polaroid Company where they received cameras and

film to donate to Soldiers.

Now, for those who haven't had the opportunity to visit outside the base, when you take a picture of a local citizen, adult or child, they instantly want to see the digitally displayed image of themselves. They absolutely love it.

The idea that I could take their picture and hand it to them right then and there. Well, I couldn't wait!

The day finally arrived; I headed out on a convoy to a local school with Iraqi Army Soldiers, and Marines of the 6th Civil Affairs Group. Our first stop was at an Iraqi Army stronghold on the edge of the village.

I loaded my backpack full of film and cameras and was led off by the IA on a foot patrol through alleys and back yards until we arrived at the school.

As expected, the children began to quickly gather around us with their usual smiles and enthusiasm.

The normal greeting from the children always begins with "mister, mister, give me, give me." I handed the first Polaroid camera to a young Marine and then instructed the IA Soldiers on how to use the cameras.

The rest of the day evolved around the cameras. The looks on the children's faces that day were priceless.

With of help of SoA and Polaroid we were able to give the children something that they have never seen. Hopefully it is something that they will be able to keep for a long time.

Winning hearts and minds is the mission here, and in my opinion it begins with the children.

I am so grateful that I was given the opportunity to be a part of something that will make a lasting impression on them.

I look forward to being able to visit other schools and villages in the Al Anbar Province and share with them the magic from Spirit of America.

For more information on projects from Spirit of America visit: spirito-america.net



Local children and Soldiers all enjoy taking and sharing pictures during Operation Snapshot.
Photos by Sgt. Charity Lewis

1-172nd KEEPS THE HEAT TURNED UP

By Capt. Gregory C. Knight

Bravo Company, 1-109th Infantry attached to TF 1-172 (Task Force Saber), has again found a significant weapons cache during operations in the Jazeera area North of Ramadi. This is yet another success against the insurgents operating in the area, and B Co. continues to drive the insurgent influence out of our area of operations.

Jazeera (located in the northern part of Ramadi), had been hotly contested by insurgents, who used the area to intimidate the local populace, launch mortar and rocket attacks on coalition forces, hide weapons caches, and stage in preparation for attacks. Through constant and steady pressure, B/1-109 IN has been able to squeeze the insurgents out of the area.

On January 15, 2006, Staff Sgt. Raymond Legrand, a Vermont resident and Sgt. Max Rooney of Fairfax, VT, discovered a sizeable cache, in excess of 50 various artillery rounds, to the northeast of Ramadi in the Jazeera area. This cache find motivated the Soldiers of B/109 IN to continue on their pursuit for weapons caches in their battle space.

Two days later [January 17, 2006] the hard work and determination of the Soldiers attached to B/1-109 IN Scout Platoon again paid great dividends.



Explosives found at a cache site in Jazeera.
Photo submitted by Capt. Gregory C. Knight

1st Lt. James Armstrong, Scout Platoon Leader from Hinesburg, Vermont, knew they would find weapons hidden in the area, and his platoon was overdue to find a big cache. Based on the information provided by Staff Sgt. Legrand and Sgt. Rooney, he was sure of it. They had been successful in detaining suspected insurgents and developing relationships

with Iraqi citizens throughout the area, but a weapons cache find would put another crimp in the insurgent supply pipeline and round out the unit success.

Sgt. 1st Class Casey Gomo, of Fairfax Vermont and a Scout Platoon Sergeant, had a suspicion that the area they were moving into held a cache. His suspicions were confirmed when he and the platoon discovered a cache of considerable size. After several hours of digging and searching, and a truckload of ordnance later, the cache find was complete. The cache consisted of 2-80mm Air to Ground Rockets, 28 - 120mm mortar rounds, 2 - 130mm mortar rounds, 1 - 120mm mortar tube, 1 160mm mortar round, 102 projectiles ranging in caliber from 155mm to 100mm, 36 RGM projectile fuses, 11 - 82mm mortar rounds, 1 - 122mm projectile, 2 - 120mm used rocket motors, 12 various artillery fuses, 1 bag of 7.62mm NATO A131 link rounds, 1 barrel of loose 7.62mm rounds, 1 machine gun tripod, 1 RPG sight, 1 hand grenade, 3 sticks of rocket fuel, 1 bucket of 7.62mm rounds, and 1 RPK machine gun drum magazine.

"I am proud of my guys, they are just a great team" said 1st Lt. Armstrong. "This is another bunch of rounds off the streets of Ramadi." 1st Lt. Armstrong noted that after seven months in the area his Soldiers, and Sgt. 1st Class Gomo in particular, had developed a sense when something was out of the ordinary.

This success follows other significant actions by B Co. 1-109 Infantry in the area.

The Scout Platoon and other members of the company have significantly decreased the level of insurgent activity in the Jazeera area, formerly a hotbed of insurgent activity. Executing a Task Force Saber plan to take and hold the area, B/1-109IN and their attached Engineers worked with 3-1-7 Iraqi Army to establish a strongpoint in central Jazeera, which is manned by Iraqi Army

Soldiers. Since its completion, the strongpoint, which is covered 24/7, the 3-1-7 IA, has eliminated any effective operations by the insurgents in the area.

Task Force 1-172 IA also implemented a plan to emplace concrete barriers along the road running parallel to the Euphrates River. This route pro-



Explosives found at a cache site in Jazeera.
Photo submitted by Capt. Gregory C. Knight

vided insurgents with an easy and quick means of egress out of the area following their frequent mortar attacks on Camp Corregidor and Combat Outpost in eastern Ramadi. Once the barrier emplacement was complete, insurgents would have to use secondary roads past Coalition Force checkpoints to escape. Since completion, mortar attacks and other insurgent activity North of the Euphrates River has become minimal, and ineffective.

Capt. Lou Gansell, B/1-109 IN Company Commander from Williamsport, PA., recently spoke with a local Sheik, who expressed appreciation on behalf of local citizens. He commented that insurgents no longer held influence in the area. The Sheik was so pleased that he moved back to the area from Baghdad.

"The Soldiers of Team Cobra take extreme pride in conducting searches and finding these weapons caches. It's extremely satisfying knowing we are putting a hurt on the insurgent logistics train, and saving American lives and equipment in the process," said Capt. Gansell.

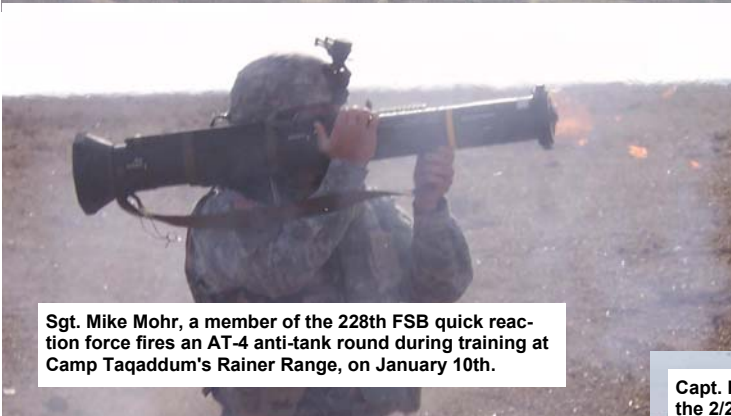
The joint efforts of the Task Force, B/1-109IN, their Engineers, and the 3-1-7 IA again highlight that the 2/28 BCT is having a positive impact in the area. Their efforts are the foundation for a free Al-Anbar Province, and a democratic Iraq.

2ND BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM IRON SOLDIERS IN ACTION



Spc. Jeremy Borrell of the 167th U.S. Cavalry pulls security on the corner of a building in Jazeera, during a dismounted patrol.

Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Rich Scaricaciottoli

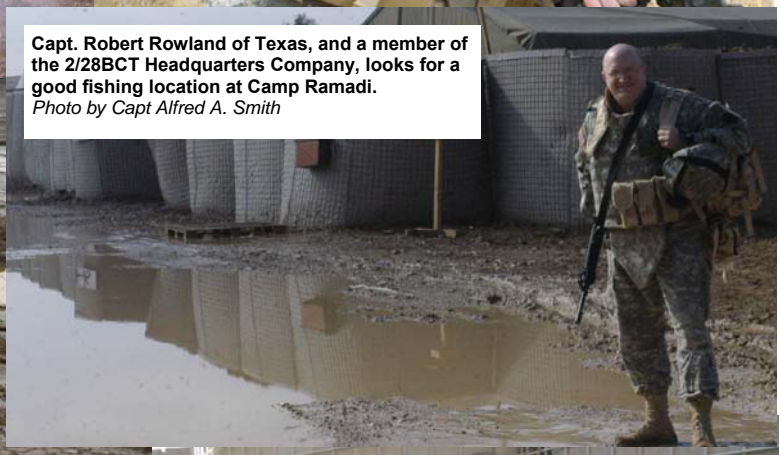


Sgt. Mike Mohr, a member of the 228th FSB quick reaction force fires an AT-4 anti-tank round during training at Camp Taqaddum's Rainer Range, on January 10th.



A good look at the mud that has overrun Camp "Ramuddy"

Photo by Capt. Alfred A. Smith



Capt. Robert Rowland of Texas, and a member of the 2/28BCT Headquarters Company, looks for a good fishing location at Camp Ramadi.

Photo by Capt Alfred A. Smith



Spc. Gregg Thuot (left), Sgt. Patrick Padilla (Middle) and Spc. Kuku Leadbeater, all medics from the 1-172 Armor, provide security at the Glass Factory.

Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Rich Scaricaciottoli



Spc. April Grant and Spc. Jeannie Hilger repair communications equipment at Camp Ramadi.

Photo by Spc. Samantha Kerschner

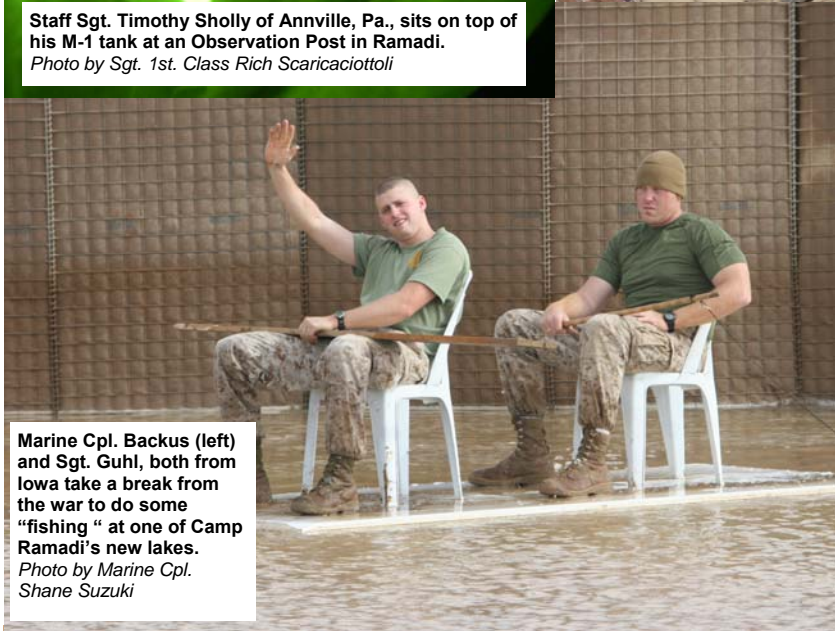
Send your pics to SFC Scary (Richard.Scaricaciottoli@us.army.mil) Include a brief description and who took the pic.



Staff Sgt. Timothy Sholly of Annville, Pa., sits on top of his M-1 tank at an Observation Post in Ramadi.
Photo by Sgt. 1st. Class Rich Scaricaciottoli



LTC Abdul Ameer (Left) , the G-1 for 1/7 Iraqi Army, Maj. Jonathan DeVries (Center) the 2/28BCT S-1 Adjutant and Ameer's Personnel Services SGM WO Bakir Salman, share notes on personnel operations.
Photo by 1st Lt. Rose Forrest



Marine Cpl. Backus (left) and Sgt. Guhl, both from Iowa take a break from the war to do some "fishing" at one of Camp Ramadi's new lakes.
Photo by Marine Cpl. Shane Suzuki



Acting Secretary of the Navy- The Honorable Dionel M. Aviles, thanks Warrant Officer Jeff Issa of the Utah 2-222 Field Artillery, for his service and dedication. Mr. Aviles visited with the Soldiers, Marines, Sailors and Airmen at Camp Ramadi on December 31, 2005.
Photo by Capt. Alfred A. Smith



Members of the 2/28BCT Headquarters Company take a minute to show their support for the Pittsburgh Steelers. The company is based out of Washington, Pa.
Photo by Spc. Samantha Kerschner



Sgt. Greg Forinash of Erie, Pa., followed thru on a dare and rooted for the Steelers in style.
Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Rich Scaricaciottoli



A LOOK AT BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Compiled by 1st Lt. Rose Forrest

Americans have recognized black history annually since 1926, first as "Negro History Week" and later as "Black History Month." What you might not know is that black history had barely begun to be studied—or even documented—when the tradition originated. Although blacks have been in America at least as far back as colonial times, it was not until the 20th century that they gained a more proper recognition in the history books.

We owe the celebration of Black History Month, and more importantly, the study of black history, to Dr. Carter G. Woodson. Born to parents who were former slaves, he spent his childhood working in the Kentucky coal mines and enrolled in high school at age twenty.

He graduated within two years and later went on to earn a Ph.D. from Harvard. The scholar was disturbed to find in his studies that history books largely ignored the black American population—and when blacks did figure into the picture, it was generally in ways that reflected the inferior social position they were assigned at the time.

Woodson, always one to act on his ambitions, decided to take on the challenge of writing black Americans into the nation's history. He established the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (now called the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History) in 1915, and a year later founded the widely respected Journal of Negro History. In 1926, he launched Negro History Week as an initiative to bring na-

tional attention to the contributions of black people throughout American history.

Woodson chose the second week of February for Negro History Week because it marks the birthdays of two men who greatly influenced the black American population, Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln. However, February has much more than Douglass and Lincoln to show for its significance in black American history.



1862 Harriet Tubman, probably the most well known "conductor" on the Underground Railroad, served as a nurse, cook, and laundress to Union troops in South Carolina. She also supported the Union cause as a spy, scout, and guerilla leader. In June 1863, she led Union troops in a raid along the Combahee River. Described as "the only American woman to lead troops, black or white, on the field of battle," she and men under the command of Colonel James Montgomery freed 750 to 800 slaves.



Lewis Douglass from the 54th Massachusetts Regiment

HISTORY OF THE BUFFALO SOLDIER

From www.fatherryan.org/blackmilitary/

The name **"Buffalo Soldier"** originated from Native American Indians who found a similarity between the Trooper's hair and that of buffalo fur. These soldiers showed courage and bravery during the battles they fought with the Indians, earning their respect.

These distinguished Soldiers are an integral part of the rich heritage found embedded in the history of the United States, especially the State of Kansas, and the U.S. military. During the years following the Civil War, the advancing endeavors of the pioneers were dependent upon the courageous actions of the Ninth & Tenth U.S. Cavalry for their protection. They fought every type of hostile Indian, bandit, cattle thief, murderer, gunman, bootlegger, trespasser and Mexican revolutionary. From Kansas, they extended their protection southward to the Rio Grande, westward to the mountains and northward to Canada.

It was the Buffalo Soldier that scouted under great hardships, to guard the lives of the early settlers who came with their families to develop this region into farms and cities. The meager and embryonic law enforcement existing in these small isolated communities would have had little chance of success without the presence of the black Soldiers. For it

was they who fought and took the most difficult and dangerous action against groups of frontier ruffians.

The only hardships not overcome by the black Soldiers in the early days of the two regiments were the racial discrimination and prejudicial treatment. The Ninth and Tenth Cavalries were consistently issued inferior horses, equipment, rations and living quarters. What was not of inferior quality was of insufficient quantity. In spite of these hardships and the difficult mission, these Soldiers compiled an enviable record of accomplishments and victories. Their ranks included sixteen Medal of Honor recipients.

On December 1, 1888, General Benjamin Grierson, upon relinquishing command of the Tenth Cavalry stated;

"Always in the vanguard of civilization and in contact with the most warlike and savage Indians of the Plains. The officers and men have cheerfully endured many hardships and privations, and in the midst of great dangers steadfastly maintained a most gallant and zealous devotion to duty, and they may well be proud of the record made, and rest assured that the hard work undergone in the accomplishment of such

important and valuable service to their country, is well understood and appreciated, and that it cannot fail, sooner or later, to meet with pure recognition and reward."



Maj. Joni Johnson is a prime example of what a modern day black woman can accomplish. The 2/28 BCT Brigade Surgeon graduated from West Point and then from Albert Einstein Medical school in Bronx, NY. Dr. Johnson is also a Pediatrician who likes taking care of kids because they are fun and innocent. "Faith in God and confidence in my abilities has been the key to my success" said Johnson.



Members of the 10th U.S. Cavalry from 1894; a unit with a distinguished record of serving along the American frontier of the day.



Spc. Robert Overton (Back), Spc. Moreira Vargas (Mid Left), Spc. Tariq, Lee (Mid Right), Spc. Brian Frye, and Staff Sgt. Theodis Hopson, are members of the 104th U.S. Cavalry; a unit that continues to distinguish itself in battle.

Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Rich Scariciottoli

CHARLIE MED GETS A NEW LOOK

By Sgt. Michelle Lynn

There is never a dull moment at Charlie Med. One of unique things about the National Guard is that the Soldiers may have civilian jobs and interests which do not necessarily relate to their MOS (Military Occupation Specialty). Nowhere is this more applicable than with the Soldiers of Charlie Med. Our personnel have a variety of occupations which range from nursing students to paramedics; paralegals to police officers.

If you have walked past Charlie Med on your way to the dining facility (DFAC), you probably noticed the small but significant changes in the appearance of our facility; courtesy of some talented Soldiers at Charlie Med. One of the main contributors is Spc. Raul Gomez from Bethlehem, PA., who is a Biomedical Equipment Repair Technician in the civilian world and the Medical Equipment Repair Specialist for Charlie Med. He finds art a relaxing hobby and has no particular favorite type of art. He enjoys it all.

"It was a way for us to show our support to the Soldiers."

The other person instrumental in our updated look is 1st Lt. Colleen McGarry from Boyertown, PA. 1st Lt. McGarry is an art teacher with Glen Forrest Elementary School in Falls Church, Virginia. Here in Iraq, 1st Lt. McGarry serves as the Health Administrative Assistant as well as a Platoon Leader to both the Treatment and Evacuation Platoons. Although her days are filled with reports, management, and paperwork, Lt. McGarry finds time to relax and enjoy her favorite pastime.

When asked how the project came into play, Lt. McGarry stated, "It was Capt. Remensnyder's (Charlie Med

Commander) idea to boost unit pride and morale." What does this mean to Lt. McGarry? "It was a way for us to show our support to the Soldiers by giving them something to look at as they walk past C-Med."

Spc. Gomez says the mural is still an unfinished project at this time, due to the cold weather. However, it only took 3 hours to work on the mural as it is now. Spc. Gomez and Lt. McGarry did some pre-planning before launching the project.

The Soldiers of Charlie Med are all very proud and honored to have this artwork which reminds us of our time here, what we do, who we represent, and how much our skills and abilities are appreciated by all.

This mural will become our signature, thereby representing Charlie Med and the 2/28 BCT.



(Top Left) Spc. Gomez and 1st Lt. McGarry preparing the stencils for the wall of the entrance to Charlie Med's Headquarters. (Top Right) Charlie Med's facility from the front after the painting project. (Bottom Right & Bottom Left) Close-ups of the finished project.
Photos by Sgt. Michelle Lynn



Send your pics to SFC Scary (Richard.Scaricaciottoli@us.army.mil) Include a brief description and who took the pic.

IRAQI POLICE RECRUITS

Continued from cover.



AR RAMADI, IRAQ — Former Iraqi Police Officers that took part in the February 7-8-9 Iraqi Police registration drive go through one of the five stations of the Screening process, which is comprised of: Personnel, Physical Fitness Exam, Medical Screening, Biometrics Automated Tool Set (BATS) registration and the Exit Personnel Screening. The recruiting drive resulted in approximately 1,840 Iraqi men registering, with more than 700 cleared and approved to attend future training classes.

Photo by Cpl. Shane Suzuki

bomb blast killed numerous innocent Iraqi male citizens waiting in line, an American Army Officer (Lt. Col. Michael McLaughlin) and a Marine Sergeant (Sgt. Adam Cann). Additionally many more innocent Iraqis were injured.

"The suicide bombing was something that backfired for the insurgency here," said Rice. "I think it creates an opportunity here for us, because the bomb itself only drives a wedge between the insurgents and the citizens of Ramadi." In fact, it was quite encouraging to see a few brave Iraqi men who were wounded by shrapnel, refuse to leave until they had applied. It has been this wedge that has turned the tide in public opinion about the local Iraqi citizens securing themselves and standing up against the insurgency, he added.

After the applicants had been proc-

essed and accepted for training, they were given instructions to come back a week later for transport to their basic training in Baghdad.

One of the first men to be processed during the January recruiting drive and declared fit to ship was former Iraqi officer Ala'a Marzok. Although a veteran of the battles against the insurgency here in Iraq, this time, he had a more personal reason for joining the police force. "I need the situation to be safe here," he said. "My brother was killed by insurgents. We need to kill them before they kill us."

A month after the first successful Iraqi Police recruiting and shipping drives, the P3 teams moved to capitalize on the success of the January turnout and held another recruiting effort at the Ramadi Glass Factory on February 7-8-9. Additionally, the Ministry of Interior (MOI) allowed former policemen to return to duty and the results were overwhelming.

Approximately 1,840 former Iraqi Police registered, with more than 700 cleared and approved for training, said Army Capt. Roger Churchwell, Iraqi Police Liaison Officer for the 2/28 BCT.

500 former Iraqi Police Officers are scheduled to attend a future February training class, 500 will attend an early March class and another 500 will follow suit and attend a late March class. The former Iraqi Po-

licemen will begin the 10 week training class at the Baghdad Police College or the Jordan Police Training Center.

"I am proud of our Soldiers, Marines, Airmen, and Sailors who worked along-side the Iraqi Army Soldiers to provide security during the IP registration process, and transported them to attend the academy. I'm impressed with the courage of the Iraqi Police; they have shown great willingness to make Ramadi a more secure city," said 2/28 BCT Commander Col. John L. Gronski.

The insurgents, once again tried to hinder the recruiting process by shooting an Iraqi Police Recruit the morning of February 8, and fired mortar rounds at the Ramadi Glass Factory where IP's were being registered on February 8 and 9. Despite the insurgents' desperate attempts, there were no further casualties to personnel, and no reported damages to equipment.

"The turnout for these recruiting drives and Former Ramadi Policemen coming back is a sign that the Iraqi policemen are eager to get back to work and take to the streets," said Churchwell, a Kansas City, Mo., native.

"While we are getting stronger, the insurgents are getting weaker."

"Getting a reliable police force is a key to this area becoming stable. You absolutely have to have one to achieve the security Ramadi needs. Without a viable police force, peace will not be possible. And today, we took a huge step toward peace."

Despite the dangers to themselves and their families, the almost 3,000 men who applied to become police officers in Ramadi, and around Iraq, are proof that the battle against the insurgency is being won and that peace can be established in Iraq.

With a confident look on his face, Col. Gronski said, "While we are getting stronger, the insurgents are getting weaker."



Sgt. Douglas Dyke performs a retina scan on Iraqi Police recruit Omer during the Iraqi Police recruitment drive at the Ramadi Glass Factory.

Photos by Cpl. Shane Suzuki

Iraqi Police Restoration By 1st Lt. Antonia Greene

HABBANIYAH, IRAQ – In the Habbaniyah/Khalidiyah district of Al Anbar province, the Iraqi Ministry of Interior (MOI) is working to restore the Iraqi Police (IP) workforce.

Following the suicide terrorist attacks of July 2005, the majority of the IP stations and sub-stations in the Habbaniyah/Khalidiyah district were destroyed. However, in early September the IP stations in Civil and Coolie Camps reopened and are considered the only operable IP stations in Al Anbar Province, with the exception of a few stations in the city of Fallujah. The Iraqi MOI is now in the process of restoring civil order in Al Anbar, and the Habbaniyah/Khalidiyah district is paving the way.

Of the 208 IPs on roster in Civil and Coolie Camps, an overwhelming 418 previous IPs showed up to the re-registration session conducted in Civil

Camp in early January. Among the candidates were former IPs from Khalidiyah, Jazeera, and Husayba, all of whom are eager to return to work at their respective stations. Each man waited in line, verified his identity, took part in an updated screening process, and filed new paperwork with the MOI. The IPs of Civil and Coolie Camps will continue patrolling the streets, handling civil matters, and providing an increased security presence.

Coalition forces are facilitating and coordinating under the direction of the 2 MEF P3P (Provincial Police Partnership Program) working hand and hand with the Iraqi MOI in order to restore a fully functional IP entity as expeditiously as possible. All the verified Iraqi Policemen are presently awaiting slots for a 10 week IP Academy in Baghdad.



(Top) IP candidates await verification and in processing. (Bottom) IP vehicles line the streets of Civil Camp.

Photos submitted by 1st. Lt. Antonia Greene



WHO ARE THOSE AIR FORCE “TACP” GUYS? By Maj. Thomas Friend

Other than the US Coast Guard, the USAF probably has fewer service members serving on the Ar Ramadi FOB than any other branch. They are most likely members of a USAF TACP (Tactical Air Control Party). A TACP will always have a Joint Terminal Attack Controller (JTAC) assigned to “clear hot” combat aircraft supporting ground troops in contact with the enemy.

A recent example of how TACPs support the other branches here at Ar Ramadi occurred on November 2nd. On that day, Senior Airmen (SrA) Kyle Haywood and SrA Cory Welton were assigned as members of the 2nd BCT Quick Reaction Force. At about 0830, the QRF was deployed to an AH-1W “Super Cobra” crash site via air assault insert with USMC and US Army elements. After establishing defensive positions in a courtyard, a combined USMC/USAF Tactical Air Control Party was established.

The combined TACP “checked in” a

flight of Super Cobras and a flight of 2 F/A-18s into the area. In order to ensure that the Cobras didn’t collide with the F/A-18s, the rotary wing and fast movers were assigned to different altitudes to maneuver their aircraft in support of the rescue operation on the ground. JTAC responsibilities were split between high and low on the ground, with Maj. Grice (USMC) controlling the rotary wing aircraft and SrA Haywood (USAF) controlling the fixed wing fast movers.

After the fire was under control by Fire and Rescue, Senior Airmen Welton and Haywood proceeded to assist in the extract the crew of the downed Cobra. Then the entire QRF (USMC, US Army and USAF personnel) started receiving small arms fire. When the USMC element began firing, the

insurgents retreated to a house roughly 100 meters south of the USMC’s position. Then the Super Cobras on station were “cleared hot” by Major Grice and they made three attack passes on the house firing 20mm main guns and Hell-fire missiles on the insurgent’s position.

Needless to say, after the final Super Cobra 20mm gun pass, the enemy fire on the QRF’s position ceased.



Senior Airmen - SrA Cory Welton and SrA Kyle Haywood are two of the USAF TACP members of the 2/28 BCT Quick Reaction.

IT DOES PAY TO STAY

By Sgt. 1st Class Shane Cole

For those of us mobilized out of the Army National Guard from 32 different States, Commonwealths and Territories, we all can point to specific reasons why we either joined or continue to serve in our respective Guard units. There are the more subjective reasons, which include but are not limited to things such as patriotism to country and community, following in a father's or relative's footsteps, or the desire to be part of an organization that fosters teamwork, camaraderie and esprit-de-corps.

We must face the facts, however, that there are also concrete, tangible incentives or rewards for service, which are often powerful motivators to both recruiting and retention. Not the least of these is financially based. Enlistment or Education Bonuses, Student Loan Repayment ("SLRP"), and Cost of Living Adjustments ("COLA's"), are just a few of the most well known or discussed incentives currently out there.

No matter what stage of our current enlistment, service or minimum service obligation we're in, it is never too soon for forward thinking financial planning, and integrating our Guard financial benefits into a coherent plan for the future. This article is going to briefly focus on just one small, but very important and often overlooked aspect of incentive or reward for service: Army National Guard Retirement Pay.

Before looking at the hard facts of dollars and cents, we all need to ask ourselves a big yet simple question: how many of us have any pension-like retirement programs in place right now, or if the answer to that is "yes, I have one",

BONUS

Any M-Day Soldier who has 20yrs of service or less now qualifies for a **bonus!!!**

SEE YOUR BN RETENTION NCO TODAY FOR DETAILS!
2/28th BCT Retention NCO - SFC Cole, DSN: 521-0314

then how many have two in place?

This may all seem very distant and abstract to many Soldiers. Therefore, in order to demonstrate the reality of hard numbers, the Army has developed what's called a "Retirement Calculator". A link to this resource can be found on AKO by clicking on "My Benefits" and then linking to "Reserve Components Retirement Calculator". Or, you can go directly to the site at:

<https://www.hrc.army.mil/site/reserve/soldierservices/retirement/retirementcalc.asp>

In order to properly use the Retirement Calculator, you need to ask yourself a few questions: What grade will I retire at? How many total years of service will I have? How many retirement points will I have? Let me provide an example that will both illustrate my point and hopefully spur a number of Soldiers to actually link to the site in a C6 center or some other location:

A **SFC/E7**, born in **1972**, serving a

total of **20-21 years**, and accumulating **3000** retirement points, will begin at age 60 to collect \$1,652.64 per month!

The bold/italicized portions in this case are just some examples of data input into the calculator – again, where do you want to see yourself when it's time to collect your retirement pay? Link to the site, and see for yourself!

In conclusion, if you're "riding the fence" when reenlistment eligibility time comes around, before making a final decision, log into AKO, put your cursor on "My Benefits", link to a Retirement Calculator, and then ask yourself if the bottom line dollar amount would have a positive impact on both you and your loved ones when retirement age rolls around. If your answer is "yes", and you haven't extended or reenlisted yet, please call SFC Shane Cole at 521-0314. He will help square away your financial future.

DEAR SOLDIER,
THANK YOU
FOR YOUR SACRIFICE
AND COMMITMENT.
BECAUSE OF YOU
OUR GREAT NATION
REMAINS TRULY GREAT
AND FREE.

STAY GUARD
SEE YOUR BN RETENTION NCO TODAY!
2/28th BCT Retention NCO - SFC Cole, DSN: 521-0314



There are no secrets to success.
It is the result of preparation, hard work,
and learning from failure.

~General (Ret.) Colin Powell

Express Yourself

Offering a Helping Hand

By Sgt. Michelle Lynn

Every Soldier has a purpose. Whether he is a member of Charlie Med or not; the Soldiers of the 2/28 BCT have proven the foundation, time and time again, for our Treatment Facility. There have been several occasions where the word camaraderie is an understatement.

One of our most recent events occurred when over 10 Marines were involved in an IED explosion. Time was critical and the amount of support we received was incredible. All hands were tasked out and all of the ancillary personnel were maxed out. However, when the time called for blood donations, service members were lined up within minutes to offer assistance.

Sgt. Hayes, the NCOIC of the ancillary services and Charlie Med's lab technician, was put to the test when such a large demand was needed for the traumas we received. When the Forward Resuscitative Surgical Team decides to take a patient to the Operating Room, Sgt. Hayes knows immediately to make the call for blood donors. Sgt. Hayes states "The patient needs whole blood that is type specific." When he receives units of blood from outside sources to keep on hand, it only consists of red blood cells. When donors arrive during traumas, whole blood containing red blood cells, platelets, and clotting factors are used to replenish a patient's mass volume which is much more beneficial to the patient.

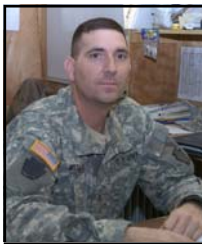
In our most critical moment, the 2/28 BCT Soldiers, Marines, Airmen, and Sailors came through. I remember running out of the "patient hold area" to grab re-supplies when the sight of hundreds of brave men and women anxious to donate blood and help in any way possible stopped me for a brief moment.

Brothers and sisters in arms were gathered together for the same purpose. As I ran back and forth several times, I observed them giving blood, assisting to rotate the Terumo blood bags, mopping the floors, helping as litter bearers and more. I also observed faces masked with concern for their fellow brethren.

On behalf of Charlie Med, we want to say **THANK YOU** to all of the brave WARRIORS that give of themselves and continue to show their support in more ways than one.

THE SAFETY CORNER

TAKE A SECOND TO THINK



Brigade Safety Officer
CW3 Joe Witmer

To continue with the safety theme from last month, here is another tactical scenario for you to ponder, and some feed back from last months scenario. As always the key is staying consistent with the actions and following through. As more feed back comes in, we are developing TTPs. Reacting collectively to any attack is the key.

Let's look at a situation that can happen in any of the Areas of Operation (AOs) involving an Observation Point (OP). In the past several weeks we have seen complex attacks on Operations throughout the AO. For your next mission brief, take 5 minutes and walk through this complex attack and discuss the actions on contact and after action activities.

SCENARIO:

Your team is manning an OP on an MSR in view of building with local civilians going about daily activities. One team member reports an individual talking on a cell phone 100 meters from the OP. The individual is making no eye contact with the OP that can be observed. Several minutes later the OP takes Small Arms Fire (SMF) from an undetermined location. People in the area are moving to cover. Moments later the OP takes fire from an RPG from a team under concealment of a wall 250 meters from the OP. SAF begins again 180 degrees from the RPG team. However, you still can not PID where the shots are coming from, only the general direction.

1. What is your reaction to the first SAF?
2. What is your reaction to the RPG Team (This is a good opportunity for a sand table drill)?
3. What is your reaction to the suspected Observer if he is still in an observation point?

When manning an OP every member of the team should be familiar with the historic locations of enemy contact. And the most likely Course of Action (COA) to take. Drills while at the OP can keep the team alert and stave off complacency.

As always, any feedback and tactical recommendations should be sent to the Brigade Safety Office. Experience is a great teacher, but we do not need everyone to have to experience this scenario to learn. Let your experiences and recommendations teach others.

FEEDBACK FROM LAST MONTHS SCENARIO:

Since the publication of the last Newsletter we've had several patrol leaders contact the safety office with recommendations for actions based on the questions from last month's news letter. As you may recall, last month our scenario surrounded an IED attack and a rollover. After going through numerous recommendations here are a couple great common denominators from all the feedback.

1. The vehicles behind the IED should get off the accelerator immediately. This action allows the drivers to take a few extra seconds to review the situation without blowing through blindly. The situation may still dictate that, but the extra second could make all the difference.
2. Another solid recommendation is to brief the turning direction of each vehicle during an attack at the mission/safety brief. This will at least get everyone on the same sheet of music when an IED is encountered. Standardization for the patrol is the key to success.

Any other scenarios that you would want covered; do not hesitate to contact CW3 Joseph Witmer the Brigade Safety Officer.



FROM THE BRIGADE SERGEANT MAJOR



Command Sgt. Maj.
Horace C. Pysher

I want to thank each Soldier, Marine, Airman, Sailor, and all of the civilian support for another great month in the 2/28 BCT. We have continued to take the fight to the insurgents in our effort to support the Iraqi people in the formation of their government.

Your efforts have detained major insurgents and located a great number of caches thereby greatly hindering the effectiveness of the enemy. However, we are now reaching a critical time in our deployment. We are at the point where many of us are feeling very comfortable in what we are doing and have forgotten what has taken place in the preceding months.

Recently, I talked to some senior leadership from a unit that came here after supporting a BCT in another AO. They stated that people got COMPLACENT around this point in the deployment and the effect it had on the unit.

Everyone needs to stay focused on the mission at hand; do not take anything for granted. You have all made a significant contribution to the success of this mission and we need to carry it out to the end.

Continue to take care of yourself, physically and mentally, and continue to look out for the person to your left and right. Given that continued focus and effort, we will finish this the right way - **Successfully!!!!**

"Iron Soldiers"

FROM THE BRIGADE CHAPLAIN

UNITED THROUGH READING PROGRAM



Brigade Chaplain
Maj. Pete Lawson

With the recent rains, we are reminded of the changing seasons in Iraq. In light of the heat and the dryness of the area we experienced in the summer and fall, one would think that that rain would be welcome. Well, not so. Anyone who has tried to negotiate the mud and water on FOB Ramadi knows that the rainy season brings on many challenges. Most of us never thought that a simple act like going to the shower would require such maneuverability.

With the changing seasons, we are reminded of the many changes we have experienced since arriving in our theatre of operations back in July, and many of these are very positive. Today our brigade elements are conducting continual operations in areas which were formally safe havens for insurgents. The number of Iraqi Security Forces has doubled in our AO. We are recruiting and training more and more IP recruits. We have donated abundantly to hospitals and schools with supplies and equipment, and have coordinated reconstruction efforts with various agencies. There is no doubt we are making a difference in a real and positive way. Yet, we acknowledge that this progress has come at price, as we grieve the loss of our fallen comrades and see others sent home because of wounds or serious injury.

Change comes in many forms.

With that in mind, it is perhaps fitting to remember that the God of the Judeo Christian faith is often celebrated as a one who is present amidst all the changes and "seasons" of life. The book of Isaiah says, "The grass withers, and the flower fades, but the Word of our God will stand forever" (Isaiah 40:8). In the New Testament Jesus Christ is lifted up as the one who is "the same, yesterday and today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). The message is that despite whatever changes we experience, good or bad, God is constant and remains the same. Perhaps that's a stability for us to grasp hold of as we continue through the different seasons of this deployment.

Chaplain (MAJ) Peter Lawson

4 February 2006

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POLICE DELIVER MEDICAL SUPPLIES

By Capt. Alfred A. Smith

AR RAMADI, Iraq

— Winning over the hearts and minds are not just words to the 2nd Special Police Commando Brigade. Their actions on January 18, 2006, demonstrated their desire to help the citizens of Ramadi.

The Police Commandos, along with Marines from the 1-506th Infantry Battalion 6th Civil Affairs Group, delivered USAID donated medical supplies and furniture to the Southern Ma'Laab Medical Health Clinic in Eastern Ramadi.



The 2nd Special Police Commando Brigade deliver USAID donated medical supplies and furniture to the Southern Ma'Laab Medical Health Clinic in Eastern Ramadi.

Picture submitted by 6th Civil Affairs Group

"This is just one of the many medical deliveries that we have coordinated with the Police Commandos and the Iraqi Army," said Major Sean W. Tubbs, Civil Affairs Officer for the 2/26 Brigade Combat Team and resident of Greensburg, PA.

The much needed medical supplies will help to provide the citizens of Ramadi with improved medical capabilities and service. The Iraqi Government, through the help of the Director General of Health for Al Anbar Province, designated where the donated supplies would be delivered to ensure the medical needs of the province were addressed.

Some of the items delivered by the Police Commandos consisted of: stethoscopes, microscopes, fetal heart monitors, IV stands, pediatric and adult scales, thermometers, suture instrument kits, examination tables, lockable file cabinets, office desks, chairs, lamps and other donated medical and office items.

"We [Commandos] are here to make things better in Ramadi. If you have any trouble you can tell us and we can help you, there is no difference between the Sunni and Shia, we are all brothers from one country," said the 2nd Commando Brigade Commander Lt. Col. Shaker Faleh Jamcel during a conversation with Dr. Omran Khalif Abed, the (Head Physician) of the Ma'Laab Health Clinic.

Dr. Abed commented that the medical deliveries are essential to provide basic life sustaining medical office equipment and they will help improve the medical infrastructure in Ramadi.

"Today, Iraqi and Coalition forces worked together as one team to assist the citizens of Ramadi," said Major Tubbs.

Working together [Iraqi Citizens, Iraqi Security Forces & Coalition Forces] is the key to making sure that the newly elected Iraqi government has the momentum it needs to be successful in Ramadi.

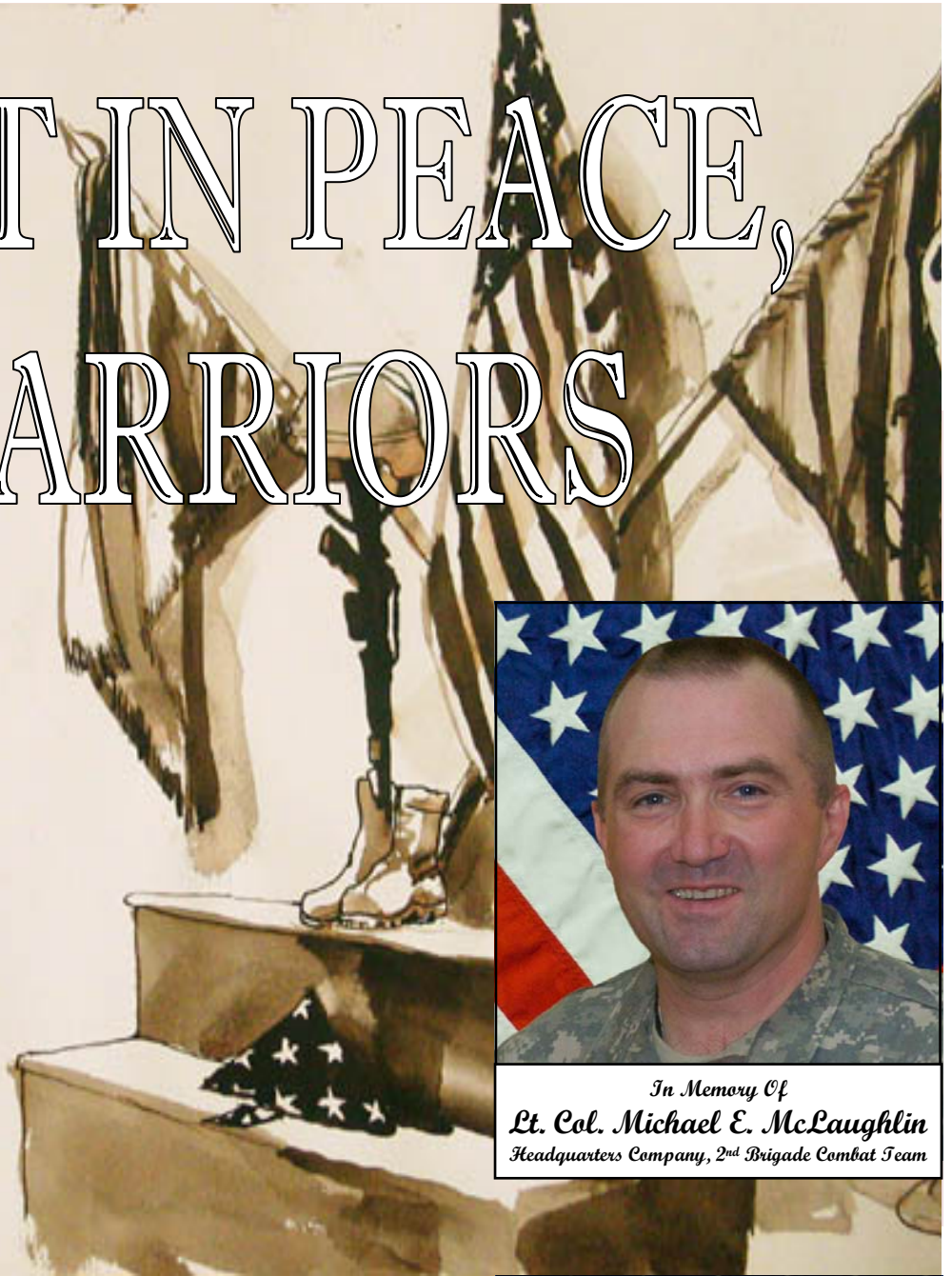
Have a story or picture for the Iron Soldier?



Contributions from all Soldiers throughout the 2nd Brigade Combat Team are encouraged for consideration. Please enclose a detailed description of the people (name, rank and unit) and subject matter for each story and photo. Include your name, unit and contact information.

Contact your unit Public Affairs Rep located on the left side of this page or send an email to richard.scariaciotoli@us.army.mil

REST IN PEACE, WARRIORS



In Memory Of
Lt. Col. Michael E. McLaughlin
Headquarters Company, 2nd Brigade Combat Team



In Memory Of
Specialist Dane Carver
Bravo Company, 1st Battalion - 125th Infantry



In Memory Of
Sergeant Adam Cann
5th Military Police Battalion - 14th Marines



In Memory Of
Sergeant Joshua Johnson
Alpha Company, 3rd Battalion - 172nd Armor